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HEALTHY LIFESTYLE IN THE OPINION OF JUNIOR HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS FROM MYŚLENICE DISTRICT (POLAND)

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Abstract. Diseases of the twenty-first century contribute significantly to the deterioration of the quality of human life and shorten its length. A healthy lifestyle is to ensure optimal health and minimise the risk of contemporary diseases of civilization. The aim of the article is to present the opinions on healthy lifestyle of the junior high school students from Myślenice district in Poland.

Keywords: health, healthy lifestyle, youth.

1. INTRODUCTION

The human's health is greatly affected by the lifestyle. According to B. Woynarowska "healthy (health-promoting) lifestyle is a conscious behaviour oriented on improving, maintaining and protecting health. This involves mainly: caring for body and mental hygiene, appropriate physical activity, healthy eating, maintaining security, periodic health examinations, not smoking tobacco and taking drugs, moderation in alcohol consumption" [4, p. 15]. According to this definition, we can distinguish two types of behaviour:

a) health-oriented, ie. favourable to health. They include: physical activity, rational nutrition, maintaining the body and environment hygiene, coping with stress, maintaining security, maintaining appropriate relationships, undergoing preventive health examinations;

b) anti-health, ie. harmful to health - smoking, abuse of alcohol and other drugs, risky sexual behaviour [Por. ibidem.].

The adolescence period (from 12 to 18-20 years of age) is the period of transformation that leads a man from childhood to adulthood. The mental and physical changes enable young people to undertake new tasks and social roles. This is the time that has a huge impact on man's lifestyle, beliefs, attitudes to life, etc. Taking risk is an essential part of nature of young people. The effects of risky behaviour for health become apparent only after many years. The youth do not see a direct connection between their behaviour and health. Unfortunately, this group is not interested in health education and preventive programs that would provide them a better, healthier life [3, p. 35-37].

2. RESEARCH METHOD AND RESULTS

The aim of this study was to learn the opinions of the junior high school (gymnasium) students from the Myślenice district (mountain region) regarding their physical activity. The contemporary mountain school has extensive experience in the education children's social skills alongside with nature, the use of mountain region for rehabilitation and recreation [1, p. 22-28].

A questionnaire of a private authorship was used in the study as the research tool. Participation in the survey was anonymous. The questionnaire was conducted in May 2016 in randomly selected schools from the Myślenice district. The selection of the sample for testing was random. 138 questionnaires were collected from the students. Analysis of the structure of the tested children indicates that the number of boys (48.6%) was slightly lower than the number of girls (51.4%). Based on the data from these surveys, the statistical analyses were carried out.

The research showed that students are relatively knowledgeable about healthy lifestyle. Respondents associate it primarily with a rational nutrition (88.6%) and active lifestyle, sports activities (87.1%). Subsequently, the students show a concern for personal hygiene and mental hygiene (17.4%) and the need to abandon alcohol, smoking and drugs (9.8%). In the students' answers one may find also such elements of a healthy lifestyle as the periodic health examinations (3%) and the security.

The respondents consensually indicated that the lifestyle (84.8%) is the most important factor that ensures optimal health and minimizes the risk of contemporary diseases of civilisation. Subsequently, the junior high school students indicated such elements as the state of the environment (5.8%), the development of medicine (5.1%) and genetics (4.4%).

The youth were asked to assess the health education implemented at school. According to the vast majority of respondents (61.6%), the activities conducted to promote the healthy lifestyle are satisfactory. Only 5.8% of the students believe that school activities in this field are not satisfactory.

Subjective assessment of the level of students' hygiene is positive, up to 92.8% of respondents believe that their level of personal hygiene is very high or good whereas only 6.5% estimated it as not satisfactory (Fig. 1).

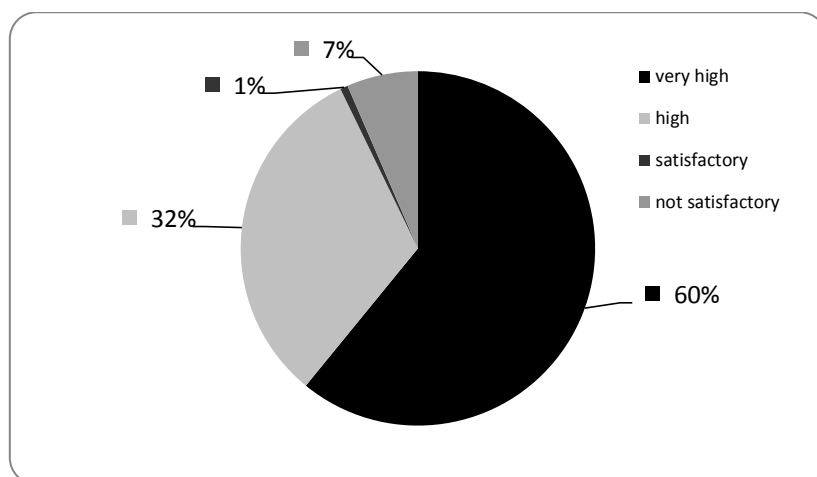


Fig. 1. How do you assess the personal hygiene level?

The results show that the higher percentage of boys surveyed (98.5%) than girls surveyed (87.3%) believe that their level of personal hygiene is very high or good. As much as 12.7% of girls considered their level of hygiene unsatisfactory (Tab. 1).

	Girls N=71		Boys N=67	
	N	%	N	%
Very high	46	64,8	38	56,7
High	16	22,5	28	41,8
Satisfactory	-	-	1	1,5
Not satisfactory	9	12,7	-	-

Tab. 1. The level of personal hygiene.

The research results indicate that students have a high level of sense of security. 79% of the students believe that their safety level is very high or high, and only 3.6% evaluated it as not satisfactory (Fig. 2).

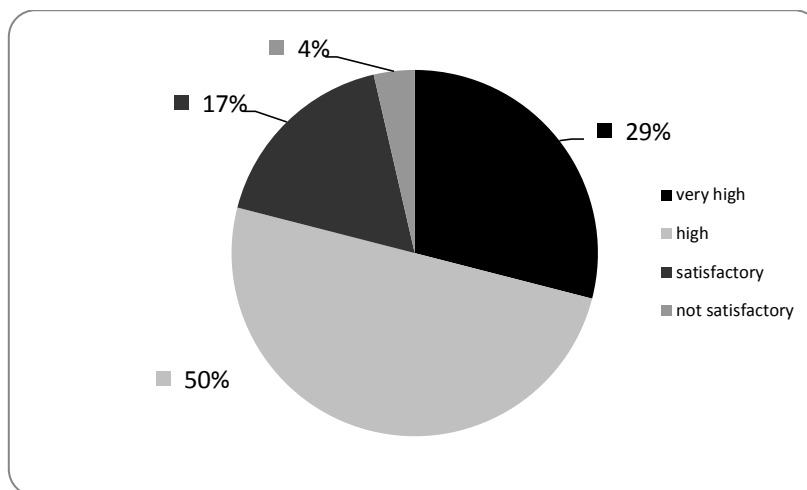


Fig. 2. How do you assess the safety level?

The analysis of the collected research material show that a higher percentage of girls surveyed (87.3%) than boys (70.1%) believe that their safety level is very high or high. On the other hand, the satisfactory level was indicated by a larger percentage of boys (23.9%) than girls (11.3%). 1.4% of girls and 6% of boys considered their level of security unsatisfactory (Tab. 2).

	Girls N=71		Boys N=67	
	N	%	N	%
Very high	24	33,8	16	23,9
High	38	53,5	31	46,2
Satisfactory	8	11,3	16	23,9
Not satisfactory	1	1,4	4	6,0

Tab. 2. Safety level.

The subjective evaluation of students' physical activity is positive - 81.1% believe that their level of physical activity is very high or high, and only 4.4% evaluated it as not satisfactory (Fig. 3).

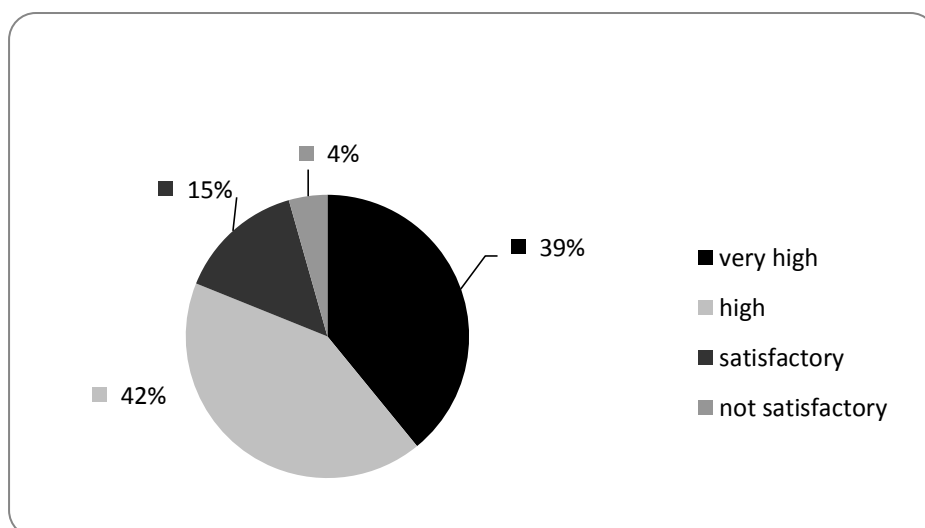


Fig. 3. How do you assess your physical activity level?

The analysis of the collected research material shows that a greater percentage of surveyed boys (85.1%) than girls (77.5%) believe that their level of physical activity is very high or high. On the other hand, the satisfactory level was pointed by a higher percentage of girls (18.3%) than boys (10.4%). Not satisfactory level of physical activity was recognised by similar degree of the junior high school students - 4.2% of girls and 4.5% of boys (Tab. 3).

	Girls N=71		Boys N=67	
	N	%	N	%
Very high	17	24,0	37	55,2
High	38	53,5	20	29,9
Satisfactory	13	18,3	7	10,4
Not satisfactory	3	4,2	3	4,5

Tab. 3. Level of physical activity.

The students were asked about how often they participated in various forms of physical activity. They confirmed their high assessment of the physical activity level. The large majority of students are willing to perform physical exercises at home (54.3%), participate in physical education classes (88.3%), sports activities after school (58.7%) and take part in some active forms of recreation in the open air (91,3%). More than 3/4 of students surveyed declared that they perform physical exercises at least three times a week.

According to opinions expressed by the surveyed students, the vast majority of them (75.4%) claimed that the level of their nutrition is very high or high. Only 3.6% of respondents considered this level to be not satisfactory (Fig. 4).

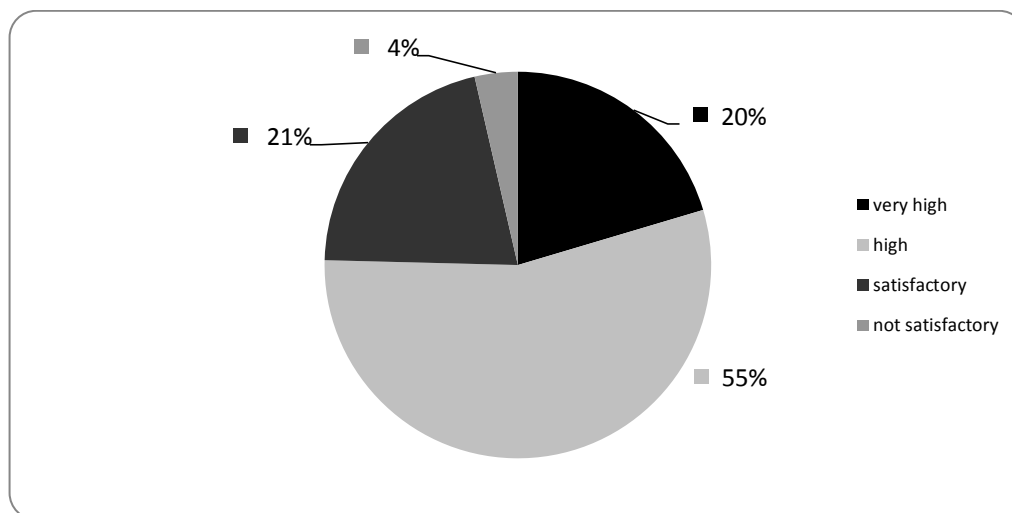


Fig. 4. How do you assess the healthy nutrition level?

The research shows that the surveyed young people assess their level of healthy nutrition in a similar way. Most of them (boys - 77.6%, girls - 73.3%) believe that it is very high or high. The satisfactory level was indicated by 23.9% of girls and 17.9% of boys. Not satisfactory level of rational nutrition was pointed out by 2.8% of girls and 4.5% of boys (Tab. 4).

	Girls N=71		Boys N=67	
	N	%	N	%
Very high	11	15,5	17	25,4
High	41	57,8	35	52,2
Satisfactory	17	23,9	12	17,9
Not satisfactory	2	2,8	3	4,5

Tab. 4. The level of healthy nutrition.

Students asked about the frequency of consumption of certain foods pointed out that every day they consume fruits (35.5%), vegetables (31.9%) and dairy products (36.2%). In the case of products considered unhealthy, the surveyed students declared that every day they reach for sweets (16.7%), chips (5.8%), fast food (2.9%) and soft drinks (18.8%). The results confirm that the level of healthy nutrition among junior high school students is satisfactory.

In the research group of students in the vast majority had never smoked cigarettes (66%). Some attempts were taken by 15.3% of junior high school students. More often, these attempts were taken by the boys (20.8%) than girls (9.9%). Currently, 18.8% of the young people smoke with different frequency: 9.4% do it every day, 5.1% at least once a week, 4.4% less than once a week. The percentage of smoking boys (20.8%) is greater than the girls (17%).

In the surveyed group, most of the young people had never consumed alcoholic beverages (52.3%). 17.4% of them have tried alcoholic drinks, but does not drink alcohol at the moment. The attempts to drink are more often taken by the boys (20.8%) than girls (14.2%). Currently, 31.2% of the young people drink alcohol with different frequency: 16% do it every week (of which 2.2% every day), 2.2% every month, 13% less than once a month. The percentage of boys who drink (20.8%) is greater than the percentage of girls (17%).

3. CONCLUSIONS

To sum it up, we may state that the students have quite sufficient knowledge about healthy lifestyle. It is most often associated with active lifestyle and rational nutrition. The research conducted shows also that the importance of the health-promoting lifestyle, which was declared by almost all of the students, is generally reflected in their everyday life. Most of the surveyed students use the active forms of recreation, as well as live in accordance with the rational nutrition principles. Risky behaviours occurring in the research group of young people are typical of their age.

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Мазур Пётр, Летоха Моніка. Здоровий спосіб життя очима старшокласників району Мисленіце (Польща). *Журнал Прикарпатського університету імені Василя Стефаника*, 3 (2-3) (2016), 62–67.

У статті висвітлено вплив здорового способу життя на життєдіяльність старшокласників. Виявлено, що сьогодні ця проблема лише частково цікавить підростаюче покоління. Паління, алкоголь, наркотики, Інтернет-залежність і фаст-фуд захопили значну частину підлітків, однак більшість із опитаних учнів таки віддають перевагу активним видам відпочинку, намагаються жити відповідно до принципів раціонального харчування. Автори наводять практичні рекомендації щодо ведення здорового способу життя: повноцінне харчування, дотримання фізичної і моральної гігієни, режиму фізичної активності та ін. У статті наведено факти щодо впливу хвороб XXI століття на погіршення якості людського життя. Мета статті полягає в тому, щоб представити думку учнів старшої школи з району Мисленіце (Польща) про здоровий спосіб життя.

Ключові слова: здоров'я, здоровий спосіб життя, молодь, фізична активність.